

House Resolution No. 1989

Whereas, it is with special pleasure that the members of the Missouri House of Representatives pause to acknowledge the legacy of César E. Chávez, an American labor leader who organized the California grape pickers into the first important farm-workers union in the United States; and

Whereas, born in Yuma, Arizona, on March 31, 1927, Chávez grew up in a series of migrant labor camps in Arizona and California and dutifully served his country in the United States Navy during World War II from 1944 to 1945, following which he returned to migrant farm work; and

Whereas, Chávez joined the Community Service Organization (CSO) in San Jose, California, in 1952, and led voter registration drives, helped Chicanos with immigration problems, and organized CSO chapters in other cities before becoming general director of the CSO in 1958 and resigning from the organization in 1962 when it refused to create a farm-workers union; and

Whereas, Chávez began to organize the National Farm Workers Association in 1962 and had enrolled 1,700 families in the organization by 1965, the year his union joined migrant Filipino grape pickers in a strike against the growers that lasted for several years; and

Whereas, the union, now called the United Farm Workers (UFW) and affiliated with the AFL-CIO, organized boycotts of nonunion farm products under Chávez's leadership; and

Whereas, on April 23, 1990, César Chávez signed the IMSS agreement with the Mexican government allowing Mexican farm-workers in the United States to provide medical benefits to their families in Mexico; and

Whereas, the recipient of Mexico's Aguila Azteca and the United States Medal of Freedom, César Chávez died from natural causes in San Luis, Arizona, on April 23, 1993; and

Whereas, César E. Chávez Day will be held April 19, 2003, and will feature the unveiling of the commemorative César E. Chávez stamp, announcement of the first César E. Chávez Scholarship in the State of Missouri at Central Missouri State University, and a One-Mile March honoring the life of César E. Chávez:

Now, therefore, be it resolved that we, the members of the Missouri House of Representatives, Ninety-second General Assembly, unanimously join together will all Missourians in acknowledging the numerous contributions César E. Chávez had made to the labor movement and farm-workers throughout the United States and Mexico, and in paying tribute to him as a new commemorative stamp is unveiled in his honor; and

Be it further resolved that the Chief Clerk of the Missouri House of Representatives be instructed to prepare a properly inscribed copy of this resolution for Jerry Hernandez, President of the Hispanic Organization for Justice Equality.

Offered by _____

Representative Sharon Sanders Brooks

District No. 37

I, Catherine L. Hanaway, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Ninety-second General Assembly, First Regular Session, do certify that the above is a true and correct copy of House Resolution No. 1989, adopted April 18, 2003.

Catherine L. Hanaway, Speaker